National Highways in Madhya Pradesh

3372. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of the National Highways in the State of Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) what steps are being taken to improve their conditions and whether Union Government is proposing to declare some more roads as the National Highways in the State of Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Nine.

(b) Improvement and upgradation of National Highways is a continuous process. Upgradation works are under taken keeping in view the existing condition of National Highways, traffic intensity, *inter-se* priority, availability of resources. 88 estimates amounting to about Rs. 23 crores for development of National Highways in Madhya Pradesh have been sanctioned during 1988-89 so far. At present there is no proposal to declare more roads as National Highways in the State of Madhya Pradesh.

Appointment of Director of National Institute of Public Cooperative and Child Development, New Delhi

3373. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have installed an IAS Officer without any professional training and background as Director of National Institute of Public Cooperative and Child Development, New Delhi (NIPCCD), and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government are aware of the widespread discontent amongst professional staff as a result thereof; and

(c) whether Government are also aware that such appointments would bring down NIPCCD in estimation of other professional; national and international institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) An IAS Officer with more than eighteen years of varied experience in different fields was appointed as Director of the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD). This appointment was made in view of the immediate needs of the Institute which was then facing acute administrative problems.

(b) No reports of any discontent amongst the professional staff of the Institute have been received.

(c) It is not apprehended that NIPCCD would go down in the estimation of other professional institutions because of this appointment.

Joint Defence Pact of India and Pakistan

3374. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press report that appeared in the National Herald of 6th March, 1989 to the effect that Pakistan's Prime Minister has ruled out a joint defence pact with India; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.